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C. K.

**ARMA VIRUMQUE CANO<sup>1</sup>**

What now seems ages ago a youngster opened his Vergil and tried to dig out the meaning of the opening lines of the Aeneid. Said lines were his introduction to Latin poetry. He had read Caesar, and a small amount of Latin prose besides, but *Arma virumque* was like a cold plunge. The reaction was tremendous. Why didn't Vergil say, *De armis et viro narraturus sum*, if that was what he meant?

I have no idea of asking you to listen for even ten minutes to a syntactical discussion as such. But, if I can show a vital or illuminating connection between one definite Latin and English construction and poetic diction as a whole, that is a different matter, possibly worthy of consideration.

Very frequently an originally, or predominantly, intransitive verb develops in poetry a transitive use. Consciously or unconsciously writers turn this use into a poetic device. This statement holds for English as for Latin. The poet who fancies that his books look down upon him from their shelves may say that they "Behind wide-wounded cases peer reproach". Shelley, in Prometheus Unbound 359-360, has

So thy worn form pursues me night and day,  
Smiling reproach.

Longfellow, in *Divina Commedia*, writes:

And Beatrice again at Dante's side  
No more rebukes, but smiles her words of praise.

Mr. Frank Tooker, in *Homeward Bound*, has this:

Soon we shall see, along the brink  
Of these cold seas, Fire Island blink  
Its welcome in the frosty sky.

There is a limited use of the construction in popular speech—e. g. 'spring a joke', 'dart a glance'. That does not, however, blunt our feeling for such lines as these from Robert Southey's *Thalaba*,

Because the scorching summer sun  
Darts fever, would'st thou quench the orb of day?  
or Mark Akenside, *Pleasures of the Imagination*,  
Through life and death to dart his piercing eye.

I should like very much to know the exact origin of 'look daggers'. If we divest ourselves for a moment of our familiarity with this phrase, we realize it to be strongly imaginative. Opposite this example in my notes, which Professor Kirby Smith had read, I found this annotation in his fine hand: "They are pestilent fellows—they speak nothing but bodkins" (Dodsley's *Old Plays* 9.165). It is just in that period of English that I should expect to find 'look daggers'. A closer parallel is Hamlet III. 2, "I will speak daggers to her, but use none". Compare Tennyson, *Locksley Hall*:

and an eye shall vex thee,  
Looking ancient kindness on thy pain.

Let me briefly dispose of the mechanics of the construction for Latin. Such mention as space in the School or College editions allows will be found in the Introduction to Professor Knapp's Vergil, §§ 128-133, and in that to Professor C. L. Smith's edition of Horace, *Odes and Epodes*, § 51. Its *floruit* is the time of the Augustan poets. For a fuller treatment see a dissertation, *De Casuum Syntaxi Vergiliana*, 36 ff., by Ferd. Antoine (Paris, 1882). It is an outgrowth of the accusative as inner object (Gildersleeve-Lodge 213, b), associated then with the accusative of effect where the object has no existence until the action of the verb is finished, as in "tear a rent in a coat", "break a hole in the ice" (compare Professor Knapp's Vergil, § 128).

Intransitive verbs used transitively include (1) verbs expressive of emotion: *palleo*, *paveo*, *tremo*, *horreo* (with their compounds and their derivatives in *-esco*), *erubesco*, *stupeo*, *ardeo*, *fastidio*, *gravor*; (2) verbs denoting the vocal expression of emotion: from *ploro*, *fleo*, *gemo*, *clamo* on to more general verbs, such as *sono* and its compounds, *crepo*, *balbutio*, *spiro*, *tono*, *cano*, *fremo*, *latro*, *bacchor*, *iuro*; (3) verbs expressive of energetic action: *propero*, *festino*, *remeo*, *certo*, *pugno*, *eo*, *milito*, *nato*, *evado*, *curro*, *vehor*, *mano*, *stillo*, *ruo*, *plaudo* (and even a verb denoting the complete cessation or absence of motion, *requiesco*).

To assist the memory we may say that verbs of motion and emotion are thus used. English poetry parallels the Latin precisely.

Let us consider by way of examples a few especially well known passages.

Anna, discovering Dido's death, *morientem nomine clamat*, 'clamors her dying with her name' (Aen. 4.674). There is an interesting parallel in Milton, *Sampson Agonistes*, 1620-1621, where Sampson is brought in to make sport for the people:

At sight of him the people with a shout  
Rifted the air, clamoring their God with praise.

Of the Trojans about the Grecian horse Vergil says (Aen. 2. 31), *pars stupet innuptae donum exitiale Minervae*, 'a part gape at the fatal gift of unwed Minerva'.

Priam rebukes Pyrrhus thus in the burning palace (Aen. 2.541): *sed iura fidemque supplicis erubuit*, 'Why, Achilles blushed at (= blushed at the thought of violating) the rights and the faith of a suppliant'.

<sup>1</sup>This paper was read before the Classical Section of the Maryland State Teachers Association, December 30, 1919.

In Aen. 1.221-222 we have:

nunc Amyci casum gemit et crudelia secum  
fata Lyci fortemque Gyan fortemque Cloanthum.

Compare 5.614 Anchisen flebant. Note also the following examples, from English and from Latin:  
Pope, Essay on Man 265-266:

Just as absurd to mourn the tasks or pains  
The great directing mind of all ordains.

Dryden, Song for St. Cecilia's Day:

Sharp violins complain  
Their jealous pangs and desperation,  
Fury, frantic indignation,  
Depth of pains and height of passion  
For the fair disdainful dame.

Herbert, Virtue:

The dew shall weep thy fall to-night.

Shakespeare, Sonnet 30:

I sigh the lack of many a thing I sought,  
And with old woes new wail my dear time's waste  
And weep afresh love's long-since cancell'd woe,  
And moan the expense of many a vanish'd sight.

Tennyson, Tithonus:

The vapors weep their burthen to the ground.

Shelley, Prometheus Unbound 403-404:

For Justice, when triumphant, will weep down  
Pity, not punishment, on her own wrongs.

Vergil, Aen. 3.394 nec tu mensarum morsus horresce  
futuros, 'Shudder not at the gnawing of the tables that  
hath been prophesied'.

Aen. 4.510:

et crinis effusa sacerdos  
ter centum tonat ore deos, Erebumque Chaosque  
tergeminamque Hecaten, tria virginis ora Dianae.

Compare the well-known passage (Aen. 1.328) where Aeneas senses the divinity of his mother, nec vox hominem sonat; Aen. 7.451, said of Alecto, verberaque insonuit, 'snapped the blows' (= 'made her lashes snap').

Compare Dryden, Alexander's Feast:

The jolly god in triumph comes:  
Sound the trumpets; beat the drums.

Compare, finally, Aen. 3.658 sonitumque pedum vocem-  
que tremesco; Aen. 11.103 Phrygia arma tremescunt.  
I should like to know how you explain to your classes  
Aen. 3.125 bacchatamque iugis Naxon . . . legi-  
mus, which may be translated freely, 'Naxos on whose  
heights the Bacchantes held their revels'. But Vergil  
says it in three words. Dr. Knapp notes, "lit., Naxos,  
reveled over on its heights", and adds "The use here is  
somewhat strained, since *bacchor* is not a trans. verb".  
If a boy understands *Arma virumque cano*, and has the  
other examples pointed out as they come along, he will  
find the transition to this interesting extension of the  
use one of no great difficulty.

Note the use of *balbutio* in Horace, Sermon. 1.3.48, with  
which compare two lines in Gray's Elegy:

No children run to lisp their sire's return.  
Muttering his wayward fancies, he would rove.

Horace, Epp. 1.2.65:

venaticus, ex quo  
tempore cervinam pellem latravit in aula  
militat in silvis catulus.

Compare "I'd rather be a dog and bay the moon".  
Vergil, Georg. 3.356:

semper hiemps, semper spirantes frigora cauri. . . .

Akenside, Pleasures of the Imagination:

Else wherefore burns  
In mortal bosoms this unquenched hope,  
That breathes from day to day sublimer things,  
And mocks possession.

I have indicated that English and Latin run singularly parallel in this construction. Let us consider the verbs of motion. Here the accusative of extent is probably the point of departure for the poetic fancy. Compare Aen. 6.122 itque reditque viam; 3.191 vastumque cava trabe currimus aequor, 'we run the vast sea in our hollow bark'; *evado* in 2.730. The examples are most numerous.

In English poetry we may cite the following:

Scott, Lady of the Lake:

Many a rocky pyramid  
Shooting abruptly from the dell  
Its thunder-splintered pinnacle.  
The western waves of ebbing day  
Rolled o'er the glen their level way.  
A foot more light, a step more true  
Ne'er from the heath flower dashed the dew.

Goldsmith, Deserted Village 347:

Those blazing suns that dart a downward ray.

Tennyson, Leonine Elegiacs:

Low-flowing breezes are roaming  
The broad valley dimmed in the gloaming.

Tennyson, Balin and Balan:

. . . and rode  
The skyless woods.

Tennyson, Tithonus:

A white-haired shadow roaming like a dream  
The ever silent spaces of the East.

Gray's Elegy:

The plowman homeward plods his weary way.

Dryden, Alexander's Feast:

Timotheus, to his breathing flute and sounding lyre  
Could swell the soul to rage, or kindle soft desire.

Shelley, Prometheus Unbound 266:

Rain then thy plagues upon me here.

With the instance of *remeare* in Horace, Sermon. 1.6.94  
compare Rebecca's Hymn, in Ivanhoe:

By night Arabia's crimsoned sands  
Returned the fiery column's glow.

Mark the use of *manare*, Horace, Epp. 1.19.44 fidis  
manare poetica mella te solum; compare Ovid, Met.  
6.312, Rem. Am. 619; Byron: "A violet dropping  
dew"; Othello V. 2

Of one, whose subdu'd eyes,  
Albeit unused to the melting mood,  
Drop tears as fast as the Arabian trees  
Their medicinal gum.

The editors here and there have a way of dropping into an apologetic tone in explaining this construction. For the most part they seem to regard it as a poetic license. Nowhere do I find the suggestion that it is an artistic touch.

Particularly is the theory that the simple verb is being used for the compound verb invoked to explain it. But this theory will not explain more than a small proportion of the instances. And even where it is possible, this explanation is, I think, more likely to blur than to sharpen the boy's feeling for the passage. The use is a bold touch, a fine freedom. It should produce upon the boy's artistic ganglia—if he has any—an effect that no compound will produce. See, for instance, Aen. 1.35 *spumas salis aere ruebant*. Here the editors are quite satisfied to note that *rueo* is equivalent to *erueo*. I should not like to think that Vergil here said to himself: 'Go to, now, I can't say *eruebant*. That would give me a cretic and spoil my hexameter'. If he did, he made a virtue of necessity. I maintain that *ruebant* is finer, infinitely finer, than *eruebant*, and am glad that my feeling for this and many kindred lines was formed before I heard of the theory of the simple for the compound verb. I have found, by the way, but one instance of *eruo* in sense analogous to that of *rueo* in this passage. To me *rueo* here suggests quite as much 'impact' as 'toss': the sea is smashed into foam. Both the conception and the expression are finely artistic and poetic. We have *rueo* again in Horace, Serm. 2.5.22, 'Tell me, augur, whence I can sweep me riches, yea heaps of coin'. Here Kiessling, with characteristic German insistence upon seeing all that is to be seen, of missing nothing, notes, 'equivalent to two compounds, *eruam* and *corruam*'. Truly it is a more powerful verb than we had supposed, if it can mean 'pile the money up' and 'put one's arms about it' that none of it shall get away. It may be here equivalent to all that or more; but the effect is not quite so tangible, and for that reason more satisfying.

Dr. H. L. Wilson, in the American Journal of Philology 21.220 (June, 1900) cited Juvenal 3.122 as the only case in Juvenal of *stillo* in transitive sense, which he explained as the simple verb for the compound, *instillo* for *instillo*. But Horace, A. P. 429, has the same use, and in that passage *exstillo* is the required compound. *Exstillo* is without exception intransitive.

In the nine instances of the transitive use of the intransitive verb I have observed in the Sermones of Horace the theory that the simple verb is being used for the compound is applicable in just three.

This brings us to *Arma virumque cano*, said to be a reminiscence of the opening line of the Odyssey, as indeed it is, but something more. Compare Horace, A. P. 141 *Dic mihi, Musa, virum; Horace, Carm. 4.2.13 seu deos regesque canit, 4.15.32 Troiamque et Anchisen et almae progeniem Veneris canemus; Catullus 34.3 Dianam . . . canamus*. Of course Il. 1.474 suggests itself. Vergil, Aen. 7.460, even employs *fremo* in this way: *arma amens fremit*. Compare the lines of Keats:

What first inspired a bard of old to sing  
Narcissus pining o'er the untainted spring.  
Or compare Tennyson of Vergil himself:  
Thou that singest wheat and woodland.

And again note these lines from the Princess:  
O Swallow, Swallow, if I could follow, and light  
Upon her lattice, I would pipe and trill,  
And cheep and twitter twenty million loves.

In the construction as a whole, then, I see not a poetic license but a poetic liberty, just one glimpse of that fine fight for freedom which is after all the keynote of the poetic style, one step, too, in the passing of the lower relief of ancient literature to the high relief of present day verse. For this construction is closely akin to the whole field of metaphorical extension. Such a verb as *meto*, 'to reap', both transitive and intransitive, comes by metaphor and personification to be employed as we speak of the 'grim reaper': compare Horace, Epp. 2.2.178 *si metit Orcus grandia cum parvis*; Ovid, Fasti 2.706 *virga lilia summa metit*, 'crops with rod the lily tops'. I find one instance in Cicero, in Tusc. Disp. 3.59 *vita omnibus metenda ut fruges*, but he is translating a fragment of Euripides (see the editors).

In modern verse it is but a step from such examples as these to the employment of a noun as a transitive verb: see Lowell, *Auf Wiedersehen*, "The turf that silences the lane"; Sidney Lanier, *Betrayal*, "The dead leaf wrinkles her a hood".

The regular parts of speech are not sufficient unto the poet, not that he may be said to have invented any more, but he has certainly forced a greater elasticity upon those we have. What is more to be expected than that his unusual vision and imagination would flower in unusual expression? Impression and expression go hand in hand. The poet cannot speak as a churl because he does not think as a churl. His unusual phrase or turn of expression, like the deft touch of the artist upon canvas, marks his distinction, sets him apart.

It is easy at times to put the finger, as in this construction, upon a definite poetic device, to have a glimpse of the poet on his way to that still rarer atmosphere where analysis fails entirely to express the charm of his fancy. It is like the pleasure we derive from the contemplation of the naivete of Homer's parataxis—a glimpse of the language in the unfolding. But with the advance of civilization and culture, introspection, and analysis, the devices become more baffling until the most innocent and usual word by application in unusual, occasionally in only slightly unusual, sense, contributes tremendously to the poetic effect. Take for instance Tennyson's *Crossing the Bar*:

But such a tide as moving seems asleep  
Too full for sound or foam,  
When that which drew from out the boundless deep  
Turns again Home.

As indicated, the construction under discussion first shows marked use in the Augustan poets. As we should expect, later epic made, in imitation, large use of it,

extending it to numerous other verbs, often with questionable taste. It lifts its head occasionally in English prose, but there is no question that the poet is the pioneer. William Dean Howells, in *Harper's Magazine* for August, 1919, has: ". . . you remember we said to our friend about the middle of last May, when the collective airmen's attempt to fly across the Atlantic hesitated failure". But Pope has the inside track: "Just hint a fault, and hesitate dislike". We shall certainly have to put Ambrose Bierce among the Post-Augustans and far back at that for saying, "He was hatted, booted, overcoated and umbrellaed as became a person about to expose himself to the night".

To sum up, we may say that the natural explanation seems to be that at times the flight of fancy or imagination by its very sweep brushes aside the natural syntactical restraints, or at least induces a corresponding boldness and freedom.

The construction is simply one of the innumerable manifestations of the constant 'tugging at the leash'. Debarred from the possibility of conveying his fancy to us as pure and free as he conceives it, the poet can but adopt a medium through which to express it, and cannot resist the attempt consciously or unconsciously to mold this medium more nearly to his will. I see, then, in the employment of the transitive for the intransitive verb one, however small, manifestation of this struggle, constant in poetry, the struggle for freedom.

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#### AENEID 6. 42-44

According to Norden, in his commentary on this passage, Vergil described in these lines, faithfully, the actual appearance of the oracle place. Norden quotes a statement in Beloch's *Campanien*, 161, to the effect 'that the whole rock is perforated by grottoes, arranged in three levels, and in part yet unexplored'.

I do not know whether since the appearance of Beloch's book excavations have been carried on. But a curious light is thrown upon the passage, and the desire to see the excavations completed is much stimulated by an interesting coincidence related in *The National Geographic Magazine*, 37. 445-478 (May, 1920), in an article entitled *Malta: The Halting Place of Nations. First Account of Remarkable Prehistoric Tombs and Temples Recently Unearthed on the Island*, by Mr. W. A. Griffiths. Mr. Griffiths describes a system of subterranean places of worship, known as *Hal Saffieni*, accidentally discovered on the island of Malta in 1902, at a village called *Casal Paula*. It consists (459) "of three series of chambers excavated out of the solid rock, on three levels".

After a detailed description of these chambers the writer continues (465: the italics are mine):

. . . we come to a square entrance into a small round cave a yard or two in diameter. Possibly the oracle was kept there. A little farther in the cave, at about the level of a man's mouth, is a hemispherical hole

in the side wall about two feet in diameter. *Here it was noticed only a few months ago that any word spoken into this place was magnified a hundred-fold and audible throughout the entire underground structure.*

Mr. Griffiths adds that a curved projection at the back of the cave acts as a sounding board, and that

The impression upon the credulous can be imagined when the oracle spoke and the words came thundering through the dark and mysterious places with terrifying impressiveness.

With this compare *Aen.* 4.510 *ter centum tonat ore deos*, of the *Massylian* priestess, and *Aen.* 6.81-82

*ostia namque domus patuere ingentia centum  
sponte sua vatisque ferunt responsa per auras.*

It is hard to believe that the parallel between the excavations at Malta and the condition of the *antrum Cumaeum*, together with Vergil's description, should be merely accidental. I do not remember that the poet ever visited Malta, and from Mr. Griffiths's account of the discovery it seems as if the caves were buried before the age of history. May we, then, assume that the resemblance is due to ethnic relationship and that the same prehistoric people who built the Maltese caves have also left their impress upon the Campanian shore (the decorations in these are said to resemble the prehistoric decorations from Spain and South France)? The archaeologist, who from experience knows how tenaciously the population of a district maintains the recollection of the existence of unusual monuments, no matter in how distorted a form, will hardly be surprised at the assumption that Vergil picked up from the rustics and incorporated into his epic some such tale keeping alive the original purpose of the queer grottoes in the *Cumacan* hill. To the archaeologist's spade we must look for the satisfaction of our curiosity. Perhaps it will add another confirmation to the view that Vergil's poem is the product of the widest and truest scholarly research.

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#### REVIEW

*The Oxyrhynchus Papyri.* Part XIII. Edited, with Notes and Translations, by B. P. Grenfell and A. S. Hunt. *Egypt Exploration Fund, Graeco-Roman Branch.* London and Boston (1919). Pp. 235. Six plates.

Of the thirteen volumes of the *Oxyrhynchus Papyri* published under the editorial supervision of Professors Grenfell and Hunt three, Parts V, XI, and XIII, are of particular interest to students of Greek literature, because they contain literary texts. In Part XIII, the volume under consideration, texts are presented as follows: I Theological (Nos. 1594-1603, pp. 1-26); II New Classical Fragments (Nos. 1604-1613, pp. 27-155); and III Fragments of Extant Classical Authors (Nos. 1614-1625, pp. 155-215).

Of special importance are the texts of Sections II and III. Of these let us consider the latter first, namely,